



ARKANSAS LIVESTOCK & POULTRY COMMISSION

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Press Release

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Phone: (501) 907-2400 1 P.M. CST, March 17, 2005

VOLUNTARY LIVESTOCK PREMISES IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM INITIATED IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

LITTLE ROCK, AR, MARCH 17, 2005: With the aide of an \$115,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture, Arkansas is up and running with its Livestock Premises Identification Program. We have hit the field hard trying to educate and instill a comfort level with the new program in the livestock producers across the state.

USDA has granted each state the flexibility of determining what approach it will take to initiate a premises ID program. We have elected to invite the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association (ACA) and the University of Arkansas' Cooperative Extension Service to be a part of the initial program, again in hopes of developing a level of comfort so the producers will know that this is not just another government program being forced on them, but yet an opportunity to have their industry's input

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into a more user-friendly program. By partnering with the U of A Cooperative Extension Service we will have the resources of a county agent in each of the 75 counties to help educate the producers locally and hopefully create another level of trust in a local contact. In an effort to get the county agents and ACA representatives involved in this endeavor, we have just recently finished four "train the trainer" sessions across the state to provide the county agents, fair managers, and ACA members with educational packets to carry on to local producer meetings.

We are excited about the enthusiasm word of this program has produced in Arkansas and look forward to a very successful implementation.

Phil Wryick, Executive Director of the Arkansas Livestock & Poultry Commission, has taken an active position in initiating this program by personally visiting 29 of the 75 counties so far to keep local producers informed about what is going on with this program on a state and national level. Mr. Wyrick's philosophy is, *"This is like advertising and we realize that the word will have to be heard more than once by more than one party to be successful."*

After only two weeks into the initiation phase, Arkansas has already registered 131 premises into its statewide premises identification database.